Doctor Strange®

DAMNATION

NICK SPENCER - DONNY CATES - ROD REIS

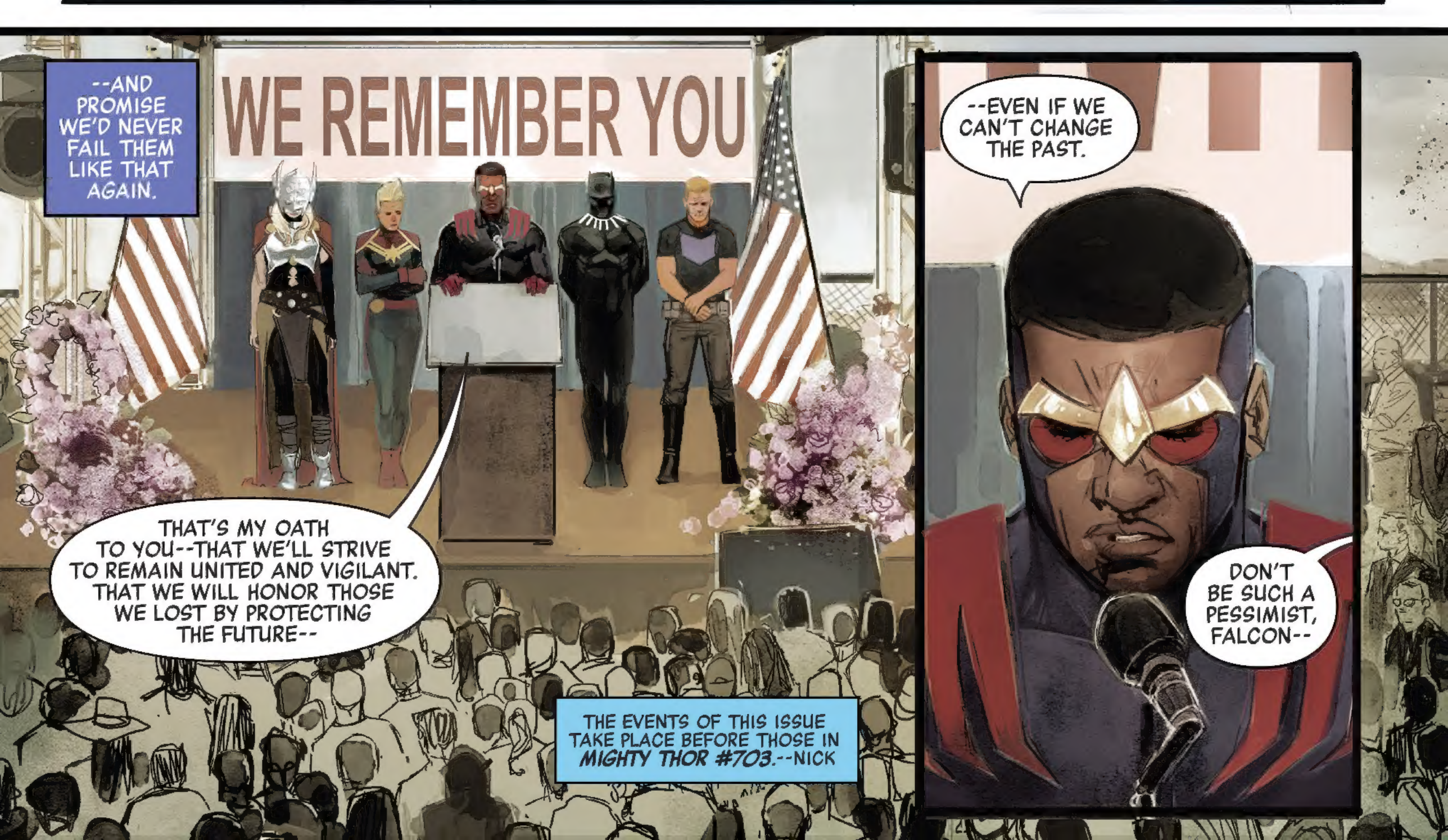
#1

MARVEL

LAS VEGAS.
SO THERE WAS A WAR.
I SPENT THE WORST OF IT STUMBLING AROUND THE DARKNESS, TRYING TO FIND SOME LIGHT.
IT WASN'T UNTIL THE END THAT WE REALIZED ALL WE'D LOST.

AN ENTIRE CITY CLAIMED BY FIRE, WIPED CLEAN FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH.
BECAUSE WE DIDN'T STOP IT. BECAUSE WE WEREN'T *STRONG ENOUGH* TO STOP IT.

IN THE AFTERMATH, ALL WE COULD DO WAS MOURN--


--AND PROMISE WE'D NEVER FAIL THEM LIKE THAT AGAIN.
WE REMEMBER YOU
THAT'S MY OATH TO YOU--THAT WE'LL STRIVE TO REMAIN UNITED AND VIGILANT. THAT WE WILL HONOR THOSE WE LOST BY PROTECTING THE FUTURE--
--EVEN IF WE CAN'T CHANGE THE PAST.
DON'T BE SUCH A PESSIMIST, FALCON--
THE EVENTS OF THIS ISSUE TAKE PLACE BEFORE THOSE IN *MIGHTY THOR #703*.--NICK

--THERE'S ALWAYS A GOOD REASON TO QUESTION THE LIMITS OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE.

THESE PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED ENOUGH.

PLEASE LET THIS WORK.

I'VE RECENTLY HAD AN EXPANSION IN POTENTIAL THANKS TO AN ENCOUNTER WITH MY WOULD-BE REPLACEMENT SORCERER SUPREME.

THERE'S CONSIDERABLY MORE POWER AT MY FINGERTIPS NOW--

DR. STRANGE...

--THE QUESTION IS WHERE I PUT THOSE FINGERTIPS.

WE SPEND SO MUCH TIME FIGHTING. SOME INVADING THREAT. SOME MONSTER WITH A GRUDGE. *EACH OTHER.*

MAYBE IT'S TIME TO TRY SOMETHING ELSE.

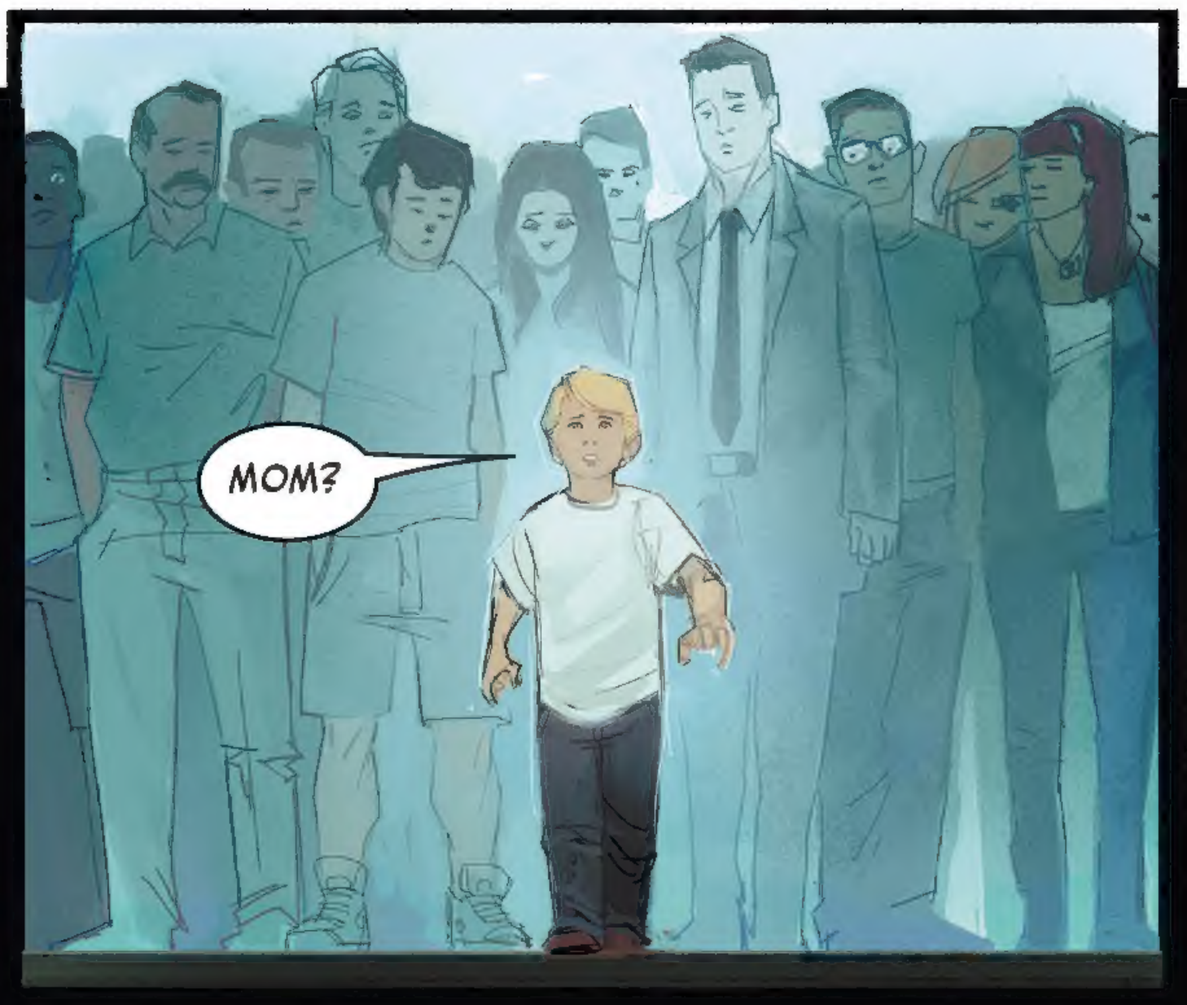
WELCOME
TO Fabulous
LAS VEGAS
NEVADA

RESTORATION.
RENEWAL.
RESURRECTION.

DOC-- WHAT THE HELL DID YOU JUST DO?
WE CALL OURSELVES AVENGERS...
AT SOME POINT, WE HAVE TO LIVE UP TO THE NAME.
THIS IS OUR JOB. TO SET THINGS RIGHT.

BUT...RAISING AN ENTIRE CITY BACK FROM THE DEAD?
THIS IS POWERFUL MAGICK AT PLAY, STEPHEN STRANGE. AND YOU OF ALL OF US MUST KNOW--MAGICK ALWAYS COMES AT A COST.
INDEED, THOR. BUT WHATEVER THAT COST MAY BE--

"--LOOK WHAT IT PAID FOR."


MOM?

JOSHUA?

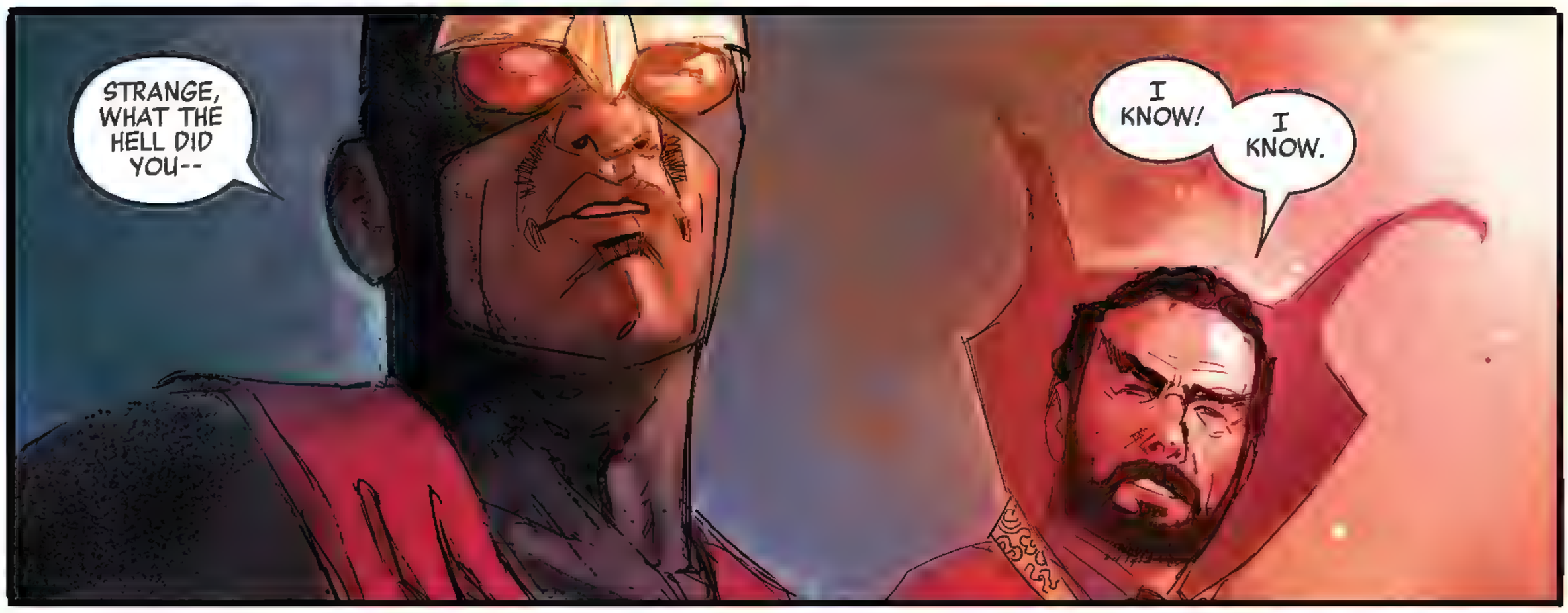
MOM!!!

FAMILIES BROUGHT BACK TOGETHER.
PEOPLE HEALED, REJOICING.
THIS IS WHO WE ARE.
Fabulous
LAS VEGAS
NEVADA
THIS COULD BE THE WORLD WE LIVE IN--

RUMBLE
--BUT SOMETHING IS ALWAYS GETTING IN THE DAMN WAY.

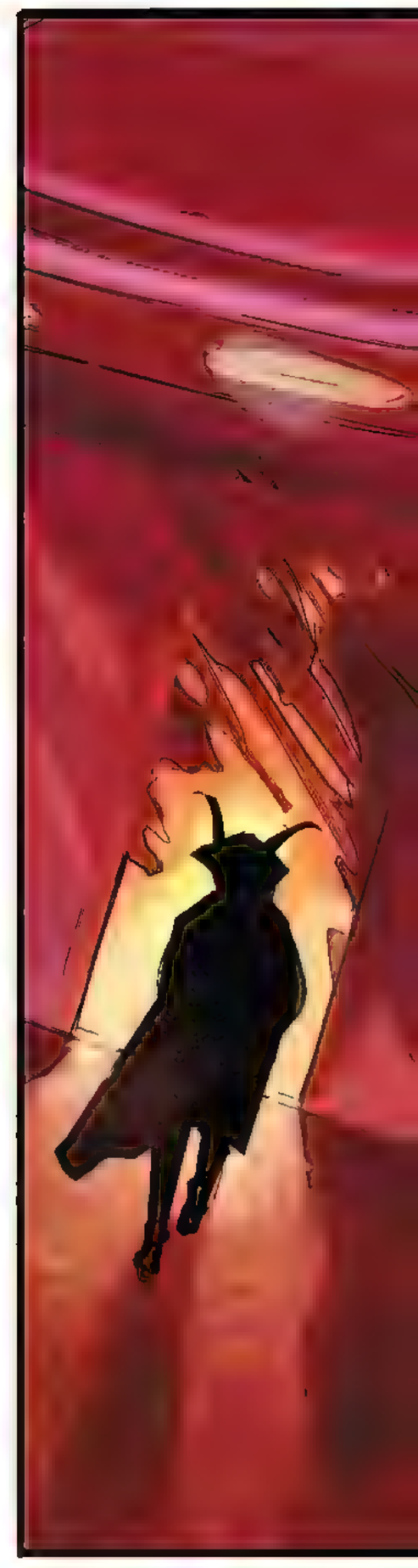
BAY

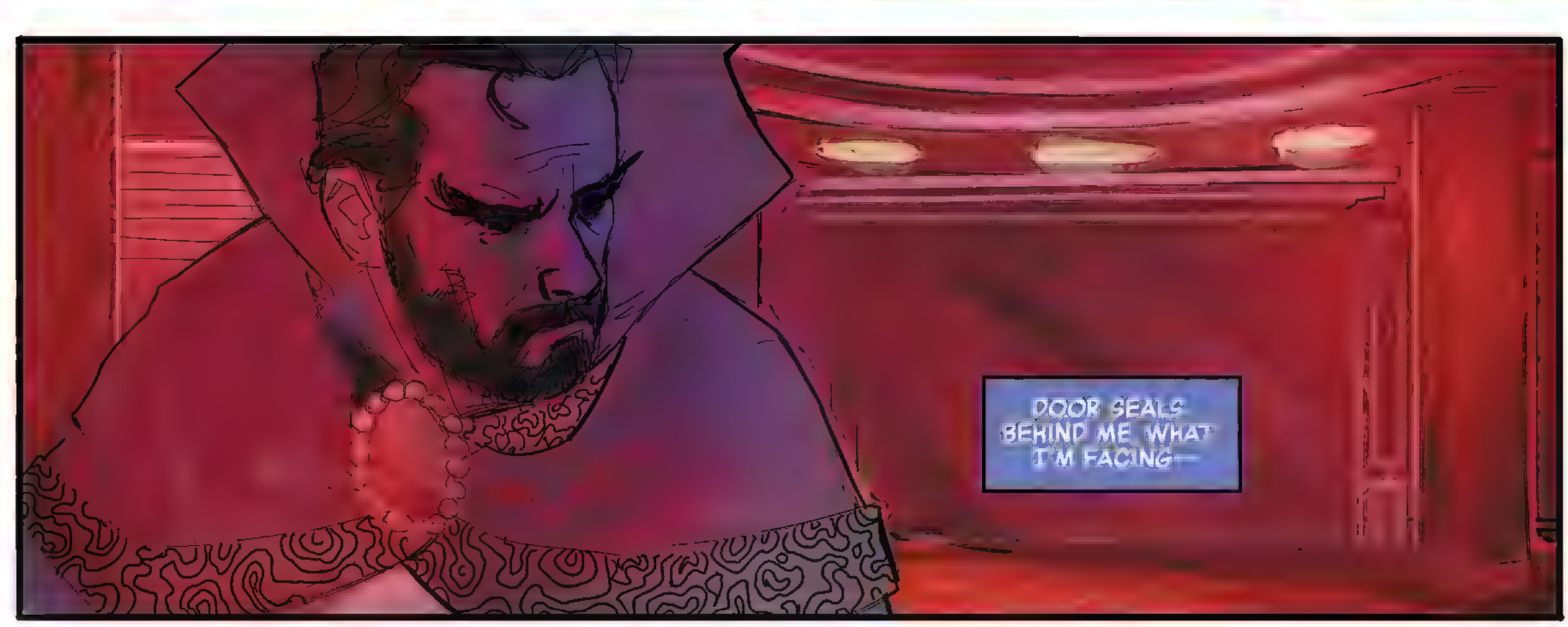
WELCOME, WELCOME, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN--
--TO SOMETHING TRULY MONUMENTAL-- HISTORICALLY MOMENTOUS-- THE GRANDEST OF GRAND OPENINGS--
--PANDEMONIUM PRODUCTIONS AND YOUR MORTAL SOUL ARE PROUD TO PRESENT THE NEWEST ADDITION TO THE WORLD-FAMOUS VEGAS STRIP--
GRAND OPENING
HOTEL INFERNO
--THE HOTEL INFERNO!!!
WE KNOW HOW MUCH YOU LOVE GAMES OF CHANCE, SO TAKE A CHANCE ON US! WE'VE GOT EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO HAVE SUCH A SORDID, SINFUL, WICKED TIME--
--WHY, YOU WON'T EVEN NOTICE YOU'VE SPENT EONS TRAPPED IN ETERNAL DAMNATION! BECAUSE REALLY, WHO NEEDS SALVATION WITH DRINK SPECIALS LIKE THESE!
SO COME ONE, COME ALL...
...OR MAYBE JUST ONE FOR NOW.
HOTEL INFERNO VIP PASS


STRANGE, WHAT THE HELL DID YOU--
I KNOW!
I KNOW.

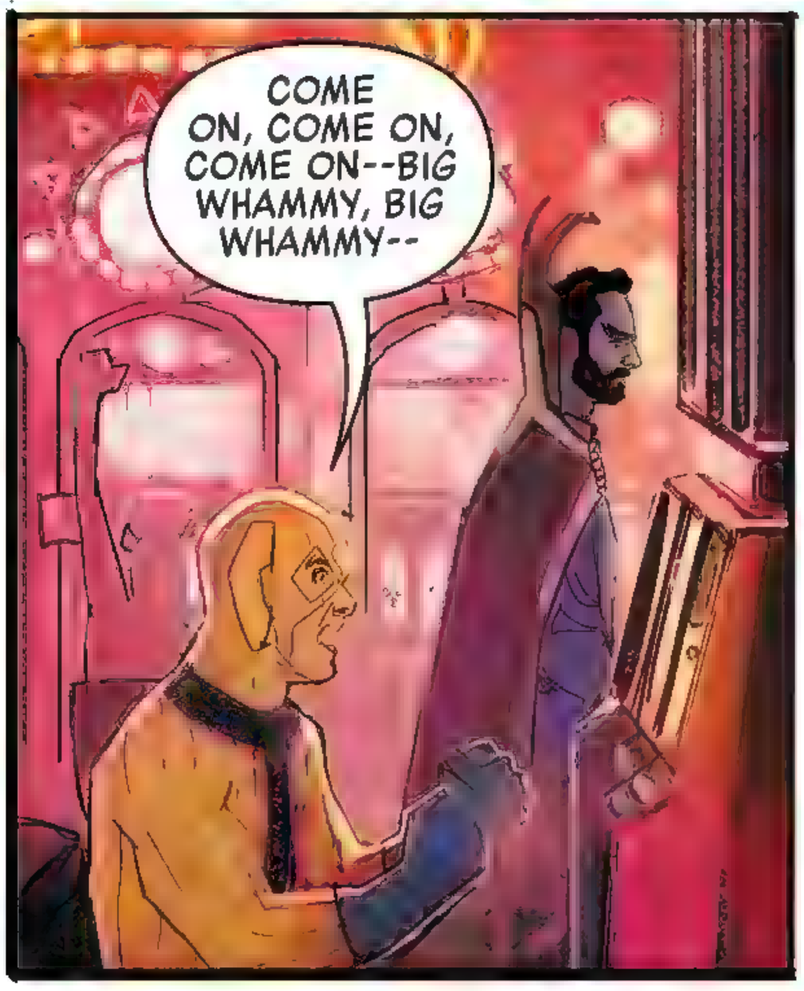
I'LL HANDLE IT.

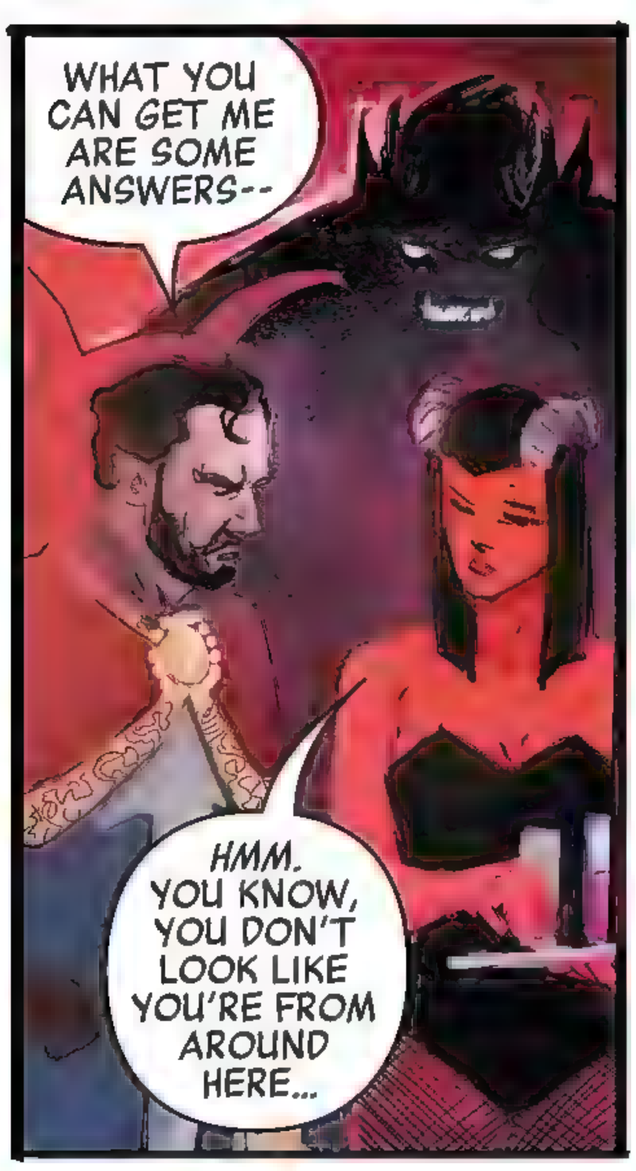
HOTEL
NFERNO



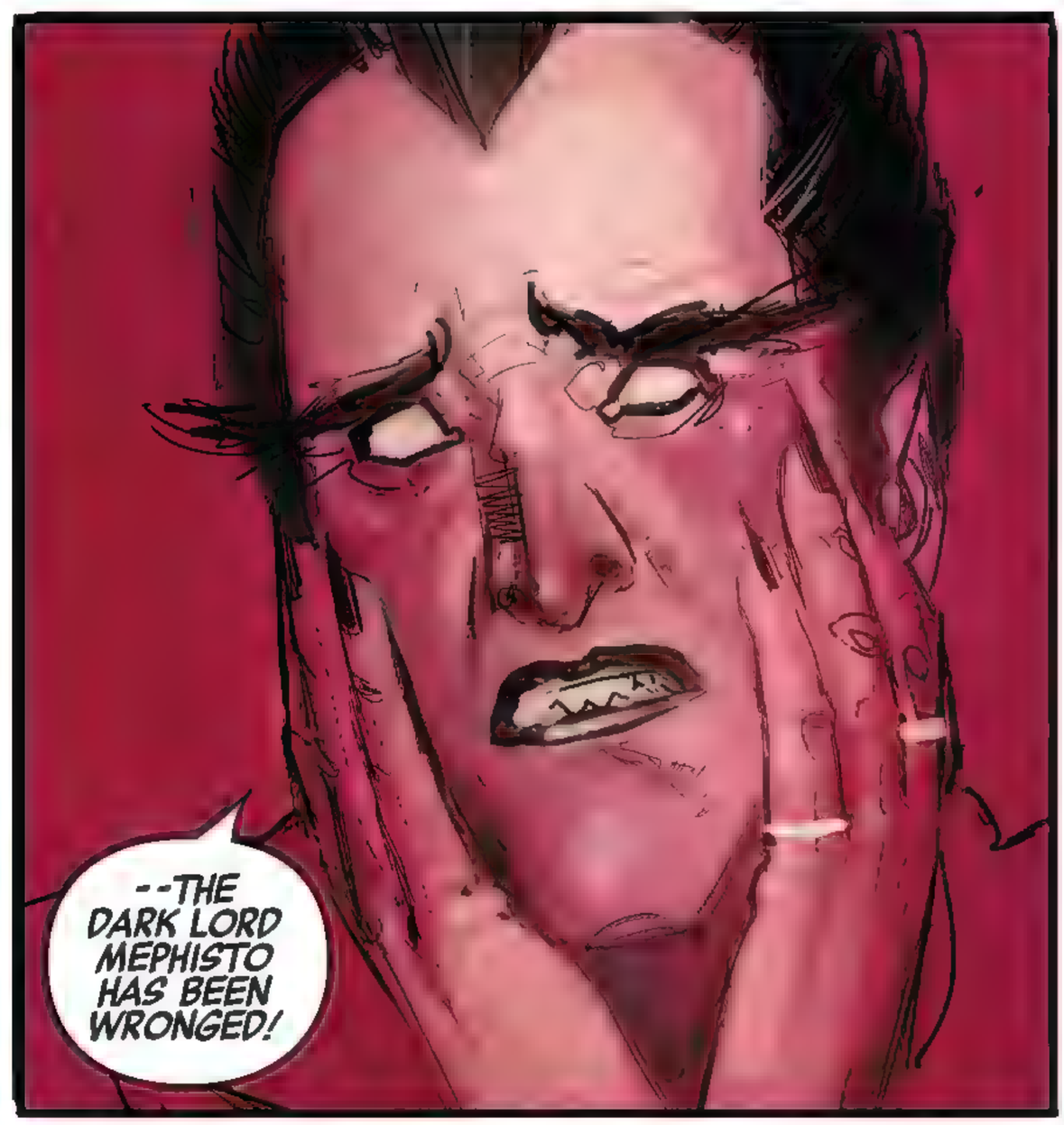

DOOR SEALS BEHIND ME. WHAT I'M FACING—

--I'LL FACE IT ALONE.





--WHAT A CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT.
MEPHISTO.



HERE, SEE FOR YOURSELF--
GET YOUR ARM OFF ME.
SSH. TALKING DURING MOVIES IS A SIN, YOU KNOW.

"I WAS MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS, LIKE ALWAYS. DOING MY THANKLESS JOB.

"I MEAN, I'LL ADMIT, THINGS HAD GOTTEN A LITTLE...

"STALE.

"BUT A DEAL'S A DEAL, RIGHT? SOMEBODY'S GOTTA PUNISH THE WICKED. STILL, IT WAS A DELIGHTFUL SURPRISE--

"--WHEN THE MOST WICKED PLACE ON YOUR WRETCHED PLANET JUST SUDDENLY DROPPED INTO OUR LAPS, WHOLE CLOTH!

"I GUESS THE POWERS THAT BE TOOK ONE LOOK AT THE SHEER NUMBER OF ALL THOSE SOULS AND DECIDED IT WOULD BE TOO MUCH PAPERWORK. WELL, BELIEVE ME--

"--I'M NOT GONNA LOOK A GIFT HORSE IN THE MOUTH.

"ME AND MY BOYS MADE OURSELVES RIGHT AT HOME. SPEND UNTOLD MILLENNIA TORTURING SOULS, PLAYING THEM SLOTS MAKES FOR A NICE LITTLE PALATE CLEANSER.

"OR MAYBE YOU JUST LEARN TO MULTITASK.

"EITHER-OR, WE'D FOUND THE KEY TO ETERNAL HAPPINESS, WHICH IS IRONIC, SURE. UNTIL--

"TRAGEDY! AS WE FOUND OUR NEWLY CLAIMED PROPERTY TAKEN BACK FROM US, BY YOU!

"NOW DON'T GET ME WRONG, I'LL ROLL THE DICE PRETTY MUCH ANYWHERE--"

--BUT THIS EARTHLY PLANE! *UGH.* LOOK AT ALL THIS CHEAP TRASH. IT'S BENEATH ME. ALSO, I CAN'T STAND THE HEAT.

AND THAT'S NOT EVEN GETTING INTO THE WORST PART--

"THE PEOPLE."

GETTING PRETTY CROWDED DOWN THERE.

THIS IS ABSURD. THIS WHOLE AREA SHOULD BE SEALED OFF.

INDEED. THE THREAT OF THAT TOWER STILL LOOMS.

BELIEVE ME, FOLKS, I TRIED--

"--BUT THE MAYOR WASN'T HEARING IT."

ER, LISTEN, FALCON--OR IS IT CAPTAIN FALCON NOW? I DUNNO. BUT I HEARD DOCTOR STRANGE SAY HE WAS HANDLING IT. AND HE'S A DOCTOR! I'M GONNA LISTEN TO HIM ON THIS ONE.

IN THE MEANTIME, THE PEOPLE OF THIS CITY ARE BEING REUNITED WITH THEIR LOVED ONES. OUR WHOLE DANG TOWN JUST ROSE UP FROM THE GROUND! MY CONSTITUENTS WANNA CELEBRATE!

AND THAT'S A LOT OF VOTES THAT JUST CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD.

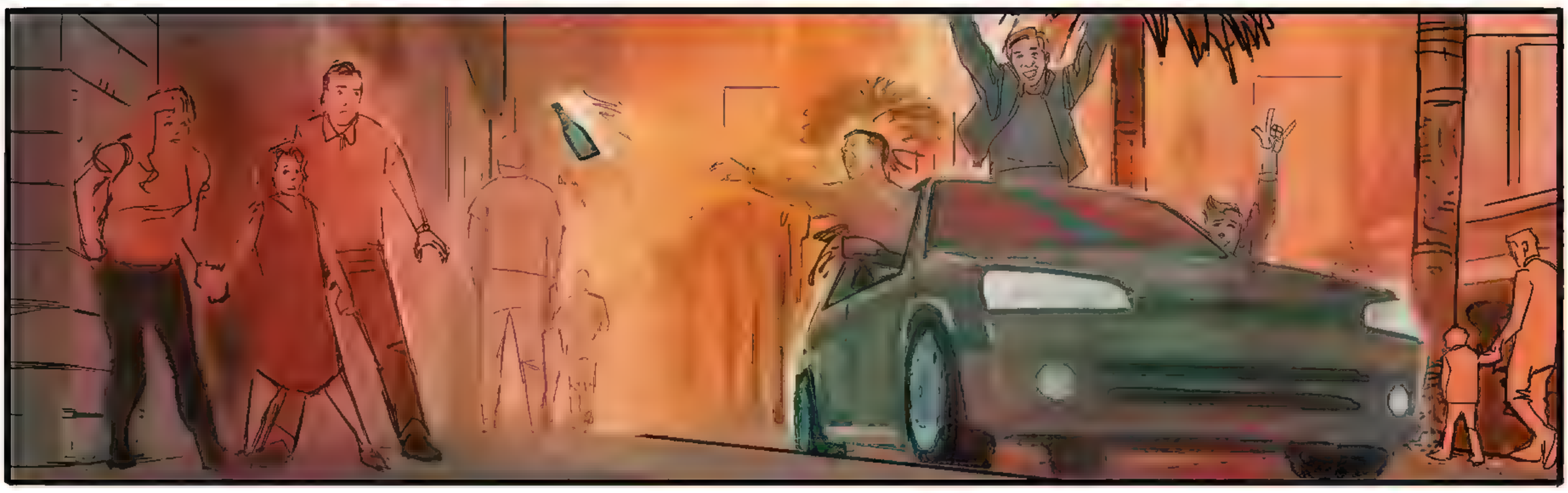
SO ALL WE CAN DO IS HOPE STEPHEN IS IN CONTROL OF THE SITUATION--

YOU MEAN THE SAME STEPHEN WHO ***CAUSED*** THE SITUATION?

WE MUST PRAY THE STREETS STAY QUIET.

HEH. WISHFUL THINKING, T'CHALLA. AS A GUY WHO HAD HIS FIRST AND THIRD WEDDINGS HERE, I CAN PROMISE YOU--IF THERE'S ONE THING VEGAS DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO DO--

"--IT'S QUIET."



EH, WHO KNOWS.

MAYBE IT'S NOT SO BAD HERE, AFTER ALL.
MAYBE I SHOULD LEARN TO EMBRACE ITS POTENTIAL, YEAH? LOTTA ROOM FOR GROWTH--
"--ESPECIALLY IN MY INDUSTRY."
I--I DON'T NORMALLY DO THIS KIND OF THING... I MEAN, I HAVE A FAMILY--I JUST FIGURE, IF I GOT A SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE, MAYBE I SHOULD LIVE A LITTLE--
DON'T ACT SO SURPRISED, GARY. CAN'T BELIEVE YOU THOUGHT A LITTLE THING LIKE DYING WOULD CANCEL OUT YOUR DEBTS.
UNFF!
BET HOUSE
YOU SURE THIS IS A GOOD IDEA?
YOU KIDDING? RIGHT NOW THE COPS ARE SO BUSY DEALING WITH THE RESURRECTIONS, NO WAY THEY CARE ABOUT SOME SMASH-AND-GRAB--
YEAH. AND IF EVERYTHING REALLY DID COME BACK--THAT MEANS ALL THE SAFES ARE FULL.
"AH, SIN--"

I CAN'T SAY IT HASN'T BEEN GOOD TO ME. AND REALLY, ONCE YOU'RE SITTING ON A FORTUNE LIKE THIS--

"--YOU'RE REALLY JUST WATCHING THE INTEREST PILE UP."
HEY, IS IT ME, OR IS IT GETTING A LITTLE HOT IN HERE?
OH YEAH, BABY--SO HOT--
NO, I MEAN, REALLY HOT--LIKE--

--BURNING!
AYYEEEE!!!

AH GOD, GET 'EM OFF ME!

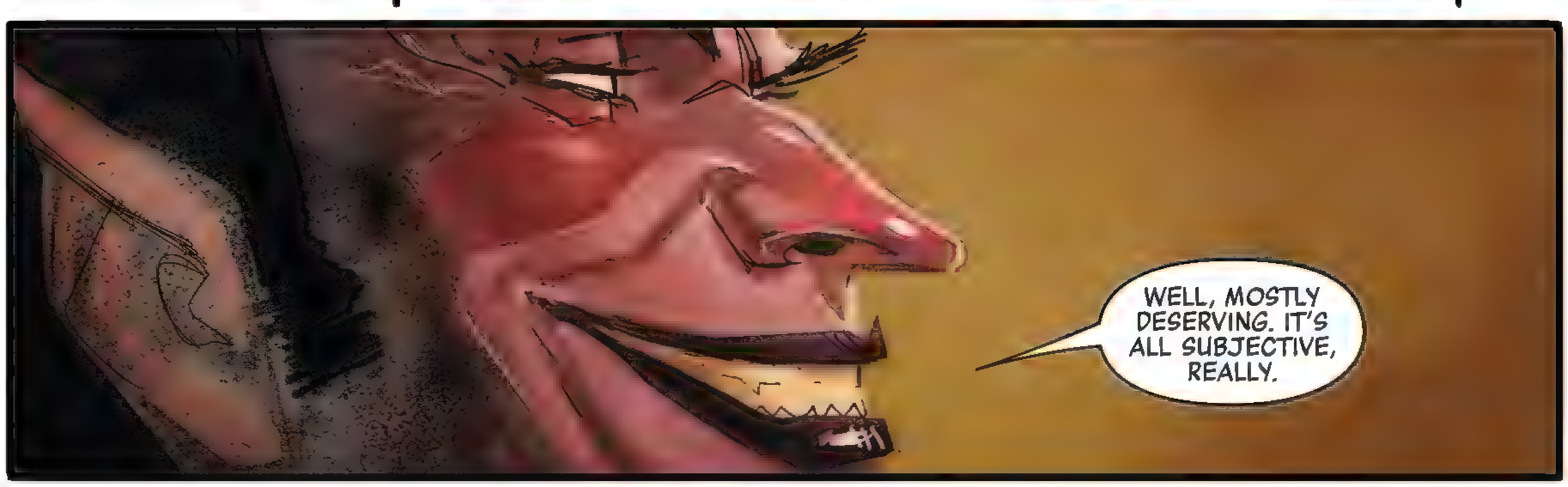
NO, NO--WAIT, WAIT--I CAN GET YOU WHATEVER YOU WANT!!!

NICE, RIGHT? GO ON, KEEP ONE FOR YOURSELF. A LITTLE THANK YOU TO OUR FIRST CUSTOMER.

HOARY HOSTS OF...

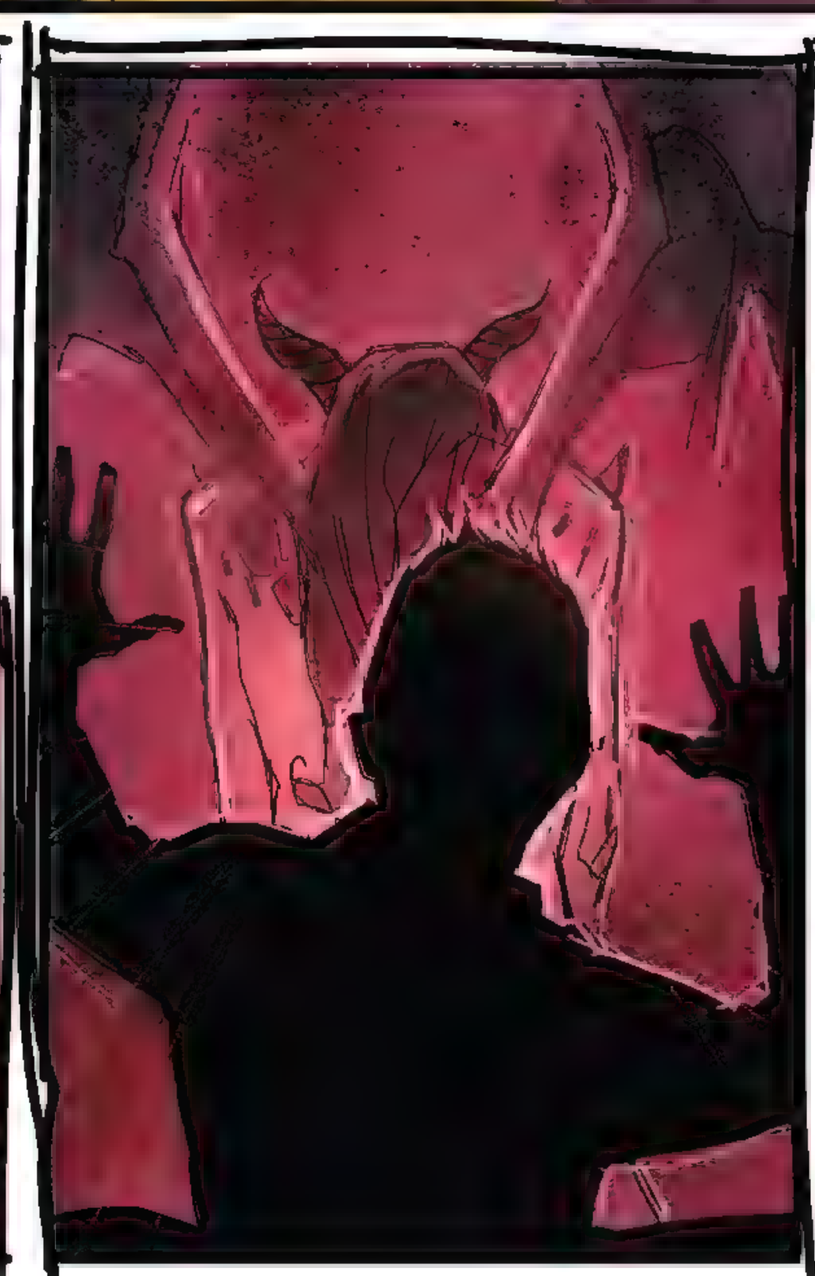
THESE ARE SOULS, MEPHISTO. YOU'RE LOCKING AWAY MORTAL, HUMAN SOULS...IN A CASINO VAULT.
DID I NOT GIVE YOU MY CARD? BUT DON'T YOU WORRY YOUR PRETTY LITTLE CLOAK, DOC. THESE FOLKS ARE ALL MORE THAN DESERVING OF A LITTLE FIRE AND BRIMSTONE--

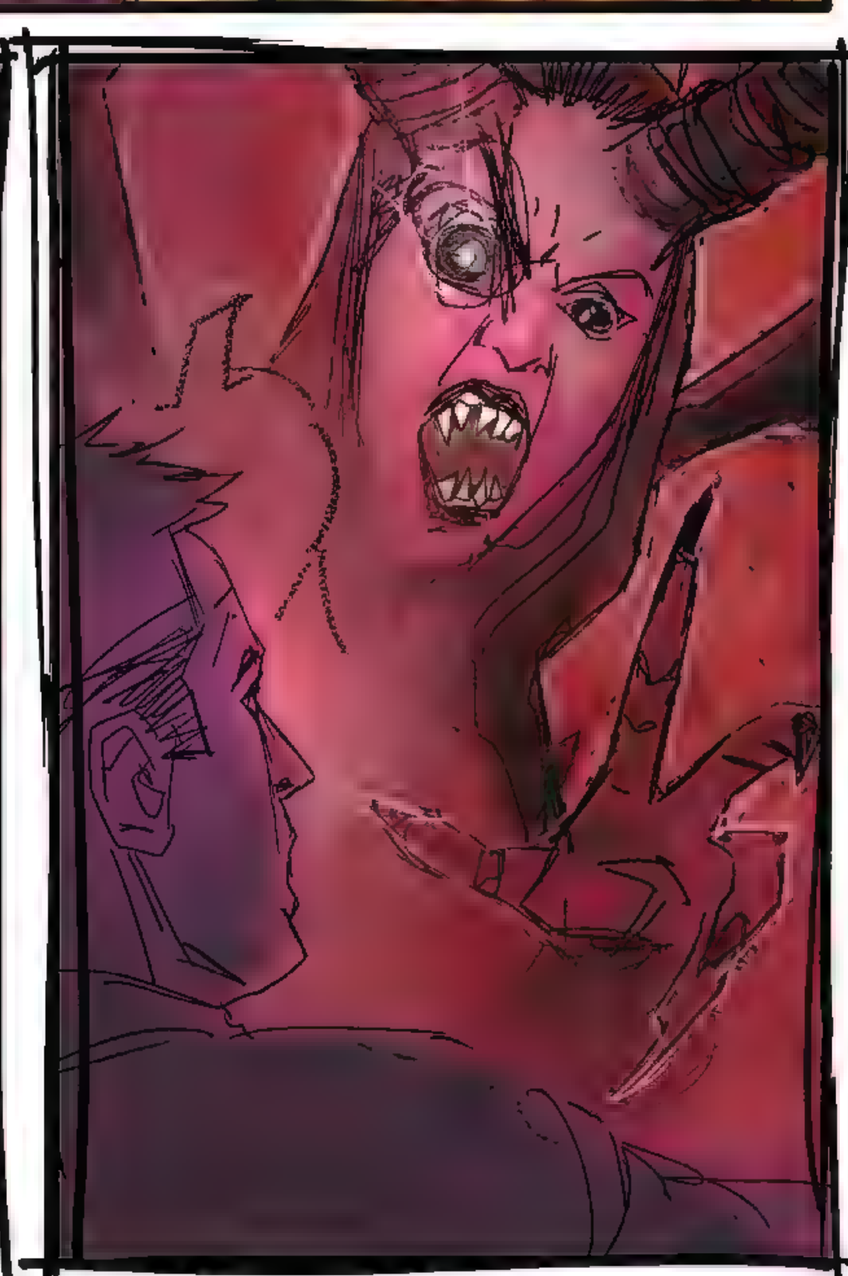
FRED! YOU FORGOT TO FEED THE METER!
AW, LEAVE IT, DORY. TODAY'S BASICALLY A HOLIDAY, RIGHT? WE'RE GONNA MISS THE BIG PARTY. 'SIDES, IT'S ONLY TEN MINUTES TO--
--AGGGHHH!!!
FREEEDDD!!!

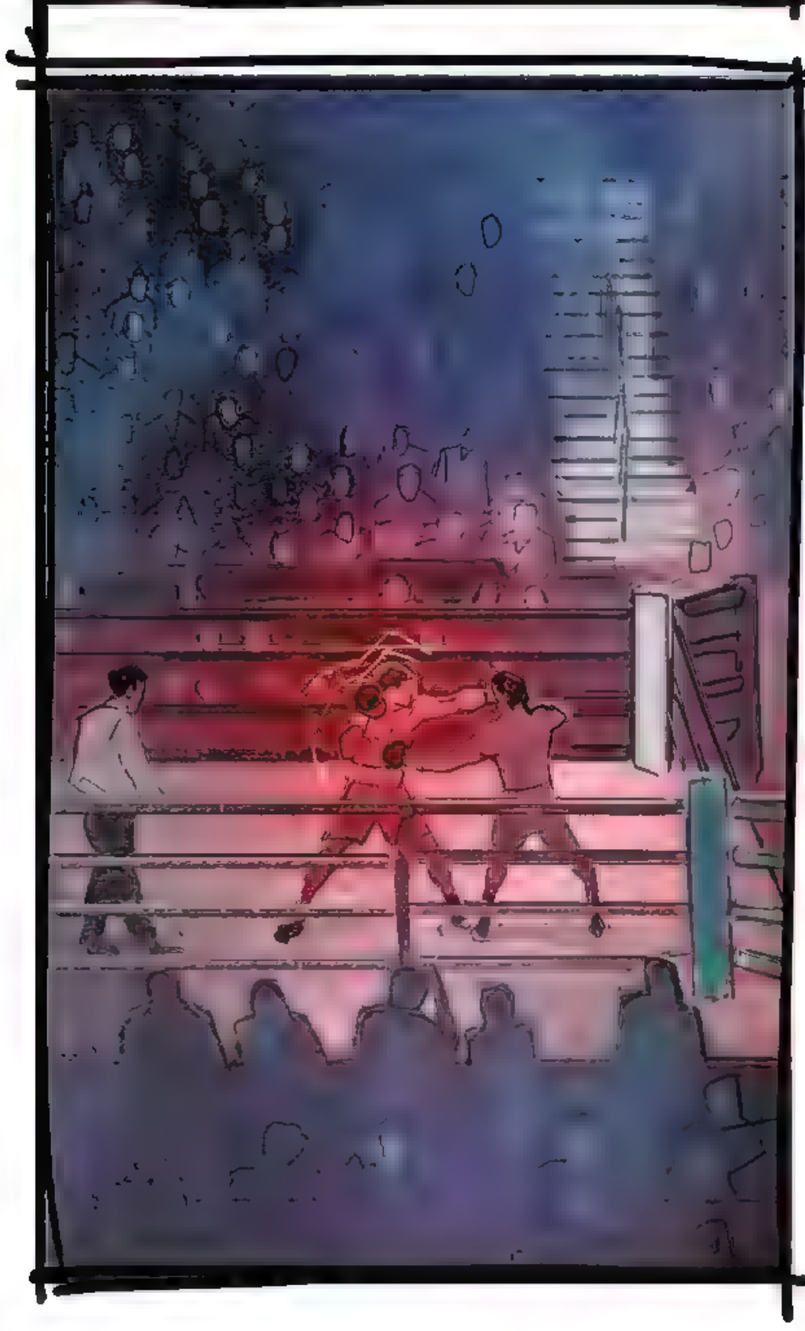

WELL, MOSTLY DESERVING. IT'S ALL SUBJECTIVE, REALLY.

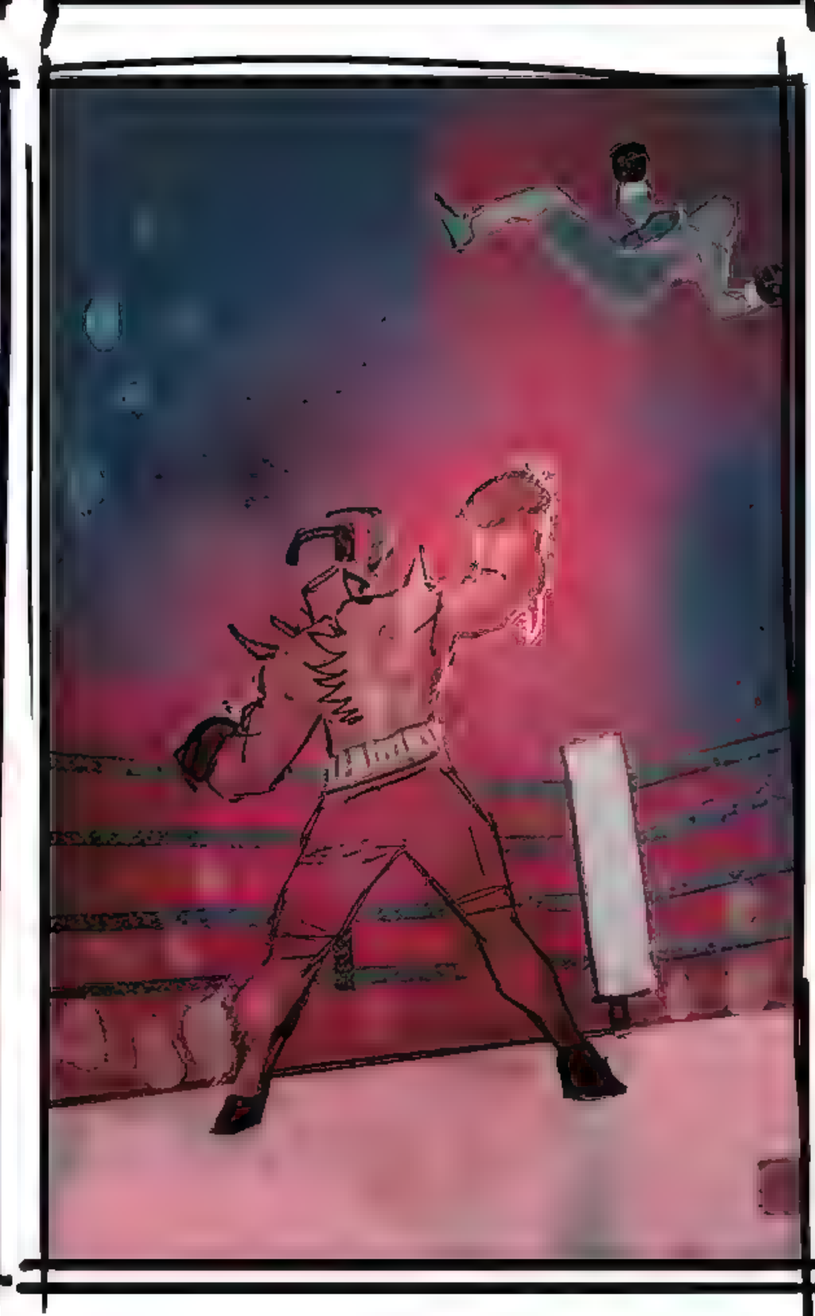
WHATEVER YOU'RE DOING, DEMON--STOP NOW. CRAWL BACK TO YOUR KINGDOM--
BACK TO MY-- DID YOU NOT HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID?

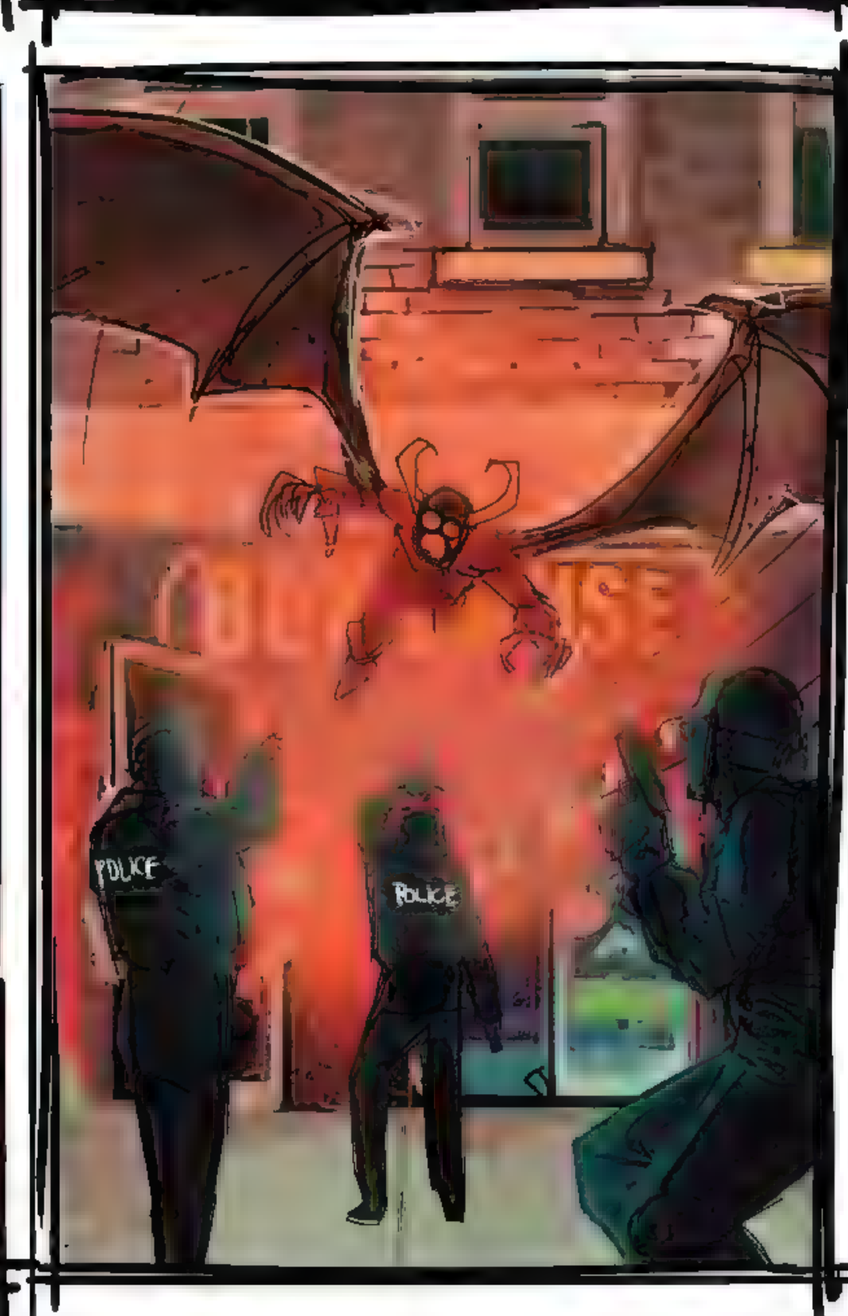
"YOU'RE IN MY KINGDOM NOW."

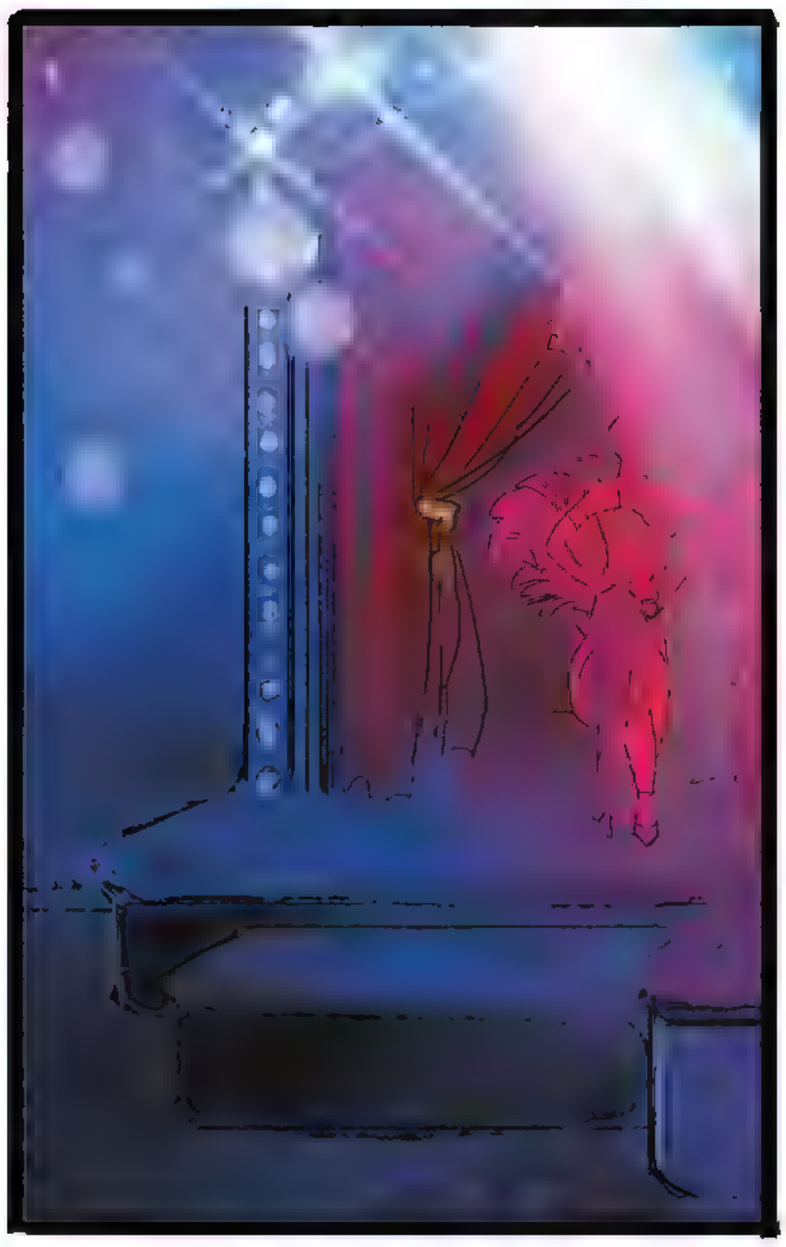




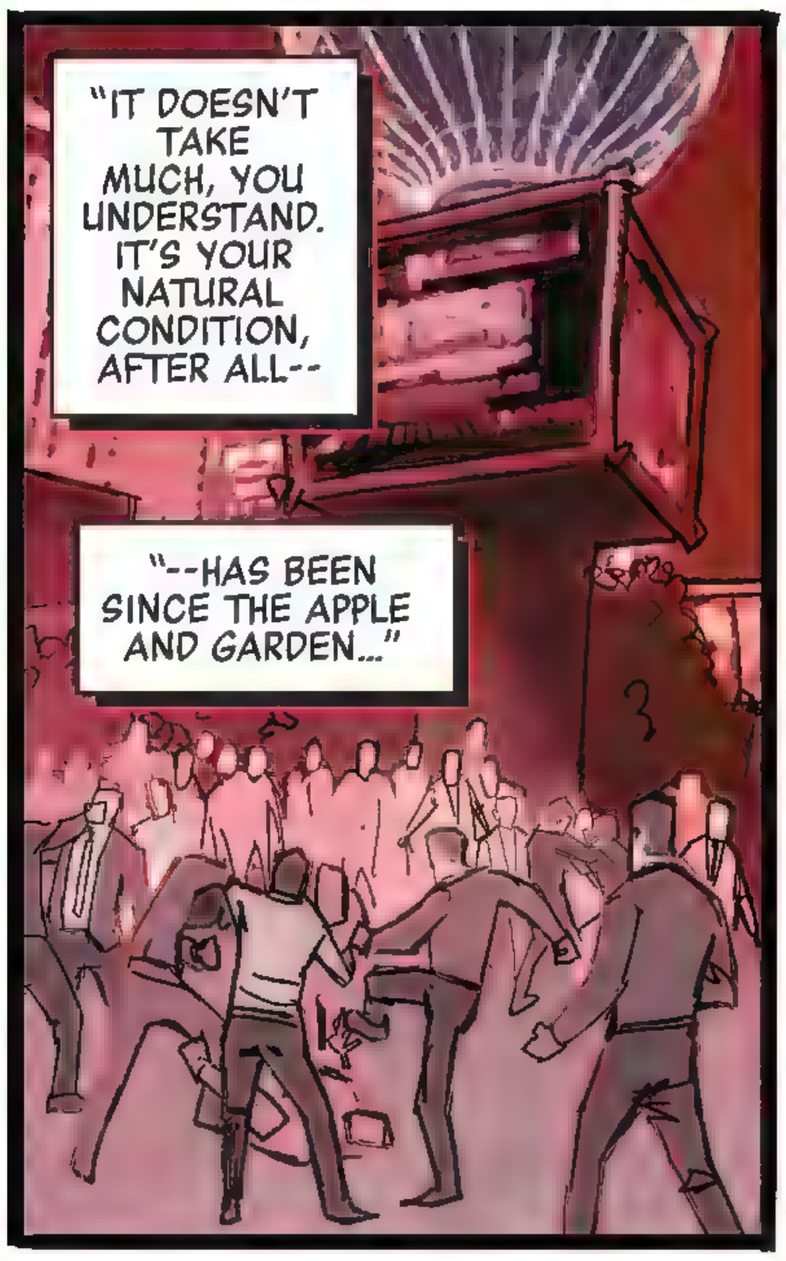





POLICE
POLICE



SIN!!!


"IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH, YOU UNDERSTAND. IT'S YOUR NATURAL CONDITION, AFTER ALL--
"--HAS BEEN SINCE THE APPLE AND GARDEN..."

...IF YOU BELIEVE THAT SORT OF THING. I'M STILL ON THE FENCE MYSELF.
POINT IS, YOU JUST LOVE TO DO WHAT YOU'RE TOLD NOT TO DO. AND I'M NOT BLAMING YOU-- HEAVENS NO!
I UNDERSTAND YOU. ADMIRE YOU. ACCEPT WHO YOU REALLY ARE, WHAT YOU REALLY WANT.

"YOU WANT TO RIP EACH OTHER APART.
"YOU WANT TO SEE SOME BLOOD."
VEGAS

AND I'M HERE TO GIVE IT TO YOU.

YOU'RE WRONG, MEPHISTO--

--THERE ARE PLENTY OF GOOD PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO WON'T BE BUYING WHAT YOU'RE SELLING.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU CORRUPT OR CONFUSE OR DECEIVE--

"--THERE ARE STILL HEROES."

THEM?! YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS. HAVE YOU SEEN THEIR RÉSUMÉS? IF ANYBODY IS GOING TO END UP IN MY REALM SOMEDAY, IT'S THEM--

THEY MAY HAVE MADE MISTAKES. BUT THEY ALWAYS COME THROUGH IN THE END.

HMM, WELL IF YOU'RE SO CONFIDENT ABOUT THAT--

--PERHAPS YOU'D LIKE TO MAKE A FRIENDLY WAGER.

YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS-- THIS? AGAIN?

I KNOW, I KNOW--I AM NOTHING IF NOT PREDICTABLE!

BUT REALLY, THE SOUL OF A SORCERER SUPREME WILL GIVE ME SERIOUS BRAGGING RIGHTS WITH ALL THE OTHER HELL-LORDS. BEELZEBUB HAS NEVER LET ME LIVE DOWN NOT GETTING HITLER--

--BUT COME ON-- THIS IS YOUR KIND OF GAME. GOOD VERSUS EVIL. TO THE VICTOR (ME) GOES--

MY SOUL. AND IF I--

IT'S BACK TO MY REALM.

AND THAT VAULT GETS EMPTIED.

AGREED.

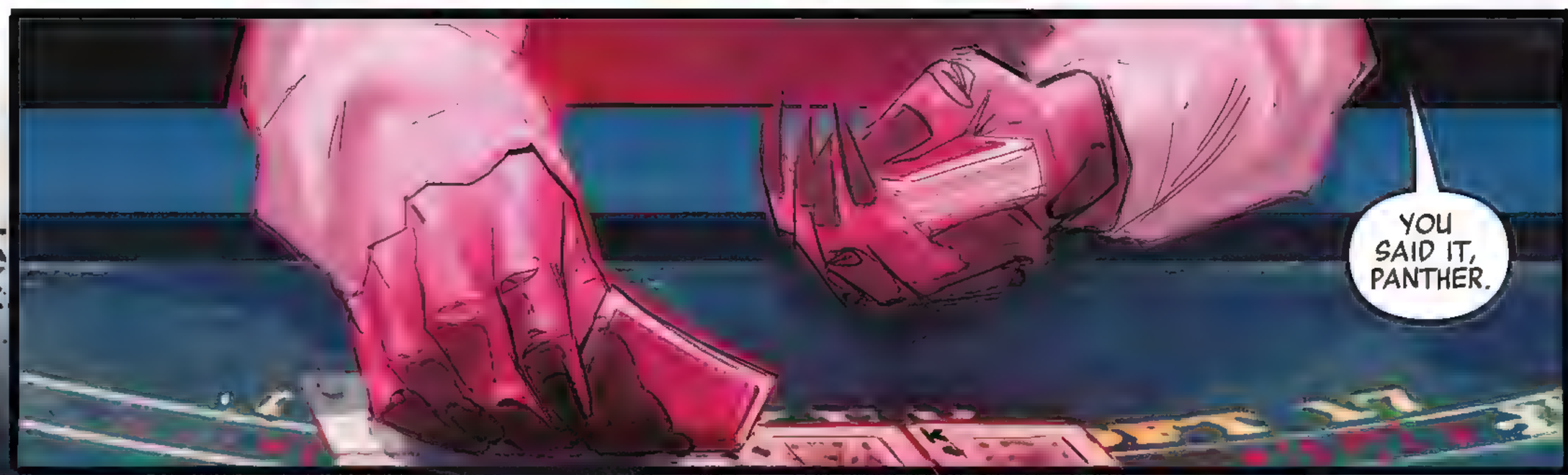
...

...THEN I'M IN.

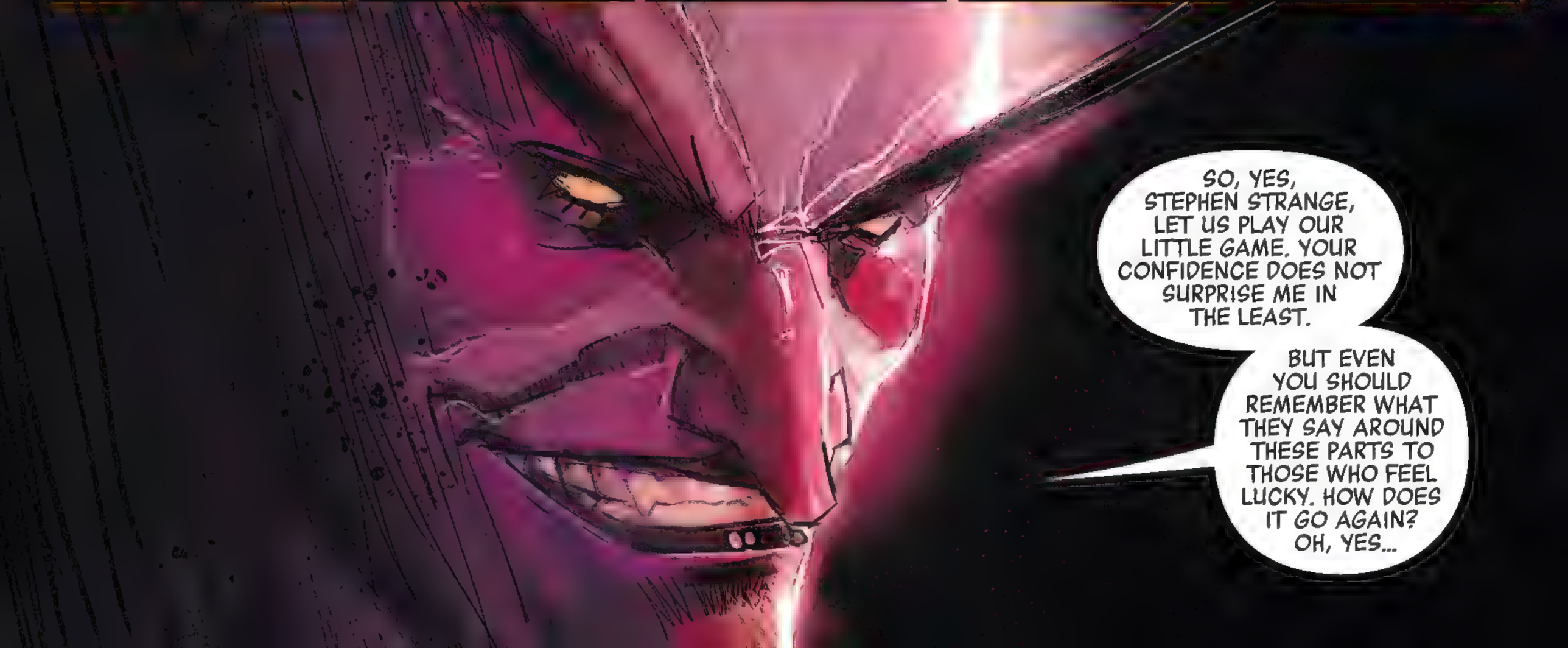
WONDERFUL! LET'S DEAL...
ENOUGH!!!
THOR, WATCH IT! THESE ARE STILL CIVILIANS, NO MATTER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THEM--
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THEM? YOU MORTALS--NEVER TAKING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR ACTIONS, ALWAYS BLAMING SOMEONE ELSE! WHY DO I WASTE MY TIME WITH YOU?!
AT LEAST SOME OF US ARE TRYING TO COME UP WITH SOLUTIONS. WE NEED TO ESTABLISH A PERIMETER--
YES, PERHAPS A GIANT IMPREGNABLE SHIELD...
WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY TO ME? BECAUSE I SEEM TO REMEMBER HIS HIGHNESS HERE HIDING OUT IN WAKANDA WHEN ALL THAT WENT DOWN. AT LEAST I WAS GETTING AHEAD OF A THREAT--
YEAH, AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO KIDNAP SOME HELPLESS KID AND FORCE HIM TO TELL YOU THE FUTURE THAT TIME.
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK, SAM--YOU REALLY COULDN'T TELL YOUR SO-CALLED "BEST FRIEND" WAS--
DON'T GO THERE, DANVERS.
OH MY GOD, STOP IT! ALL OF YOU! THIS IS ALL YOU EVER DO--
--FIGHT, FIGHT, FIGHT WITH EACH OTHER, ALL THE DAMN TIME.

FIGHT.
HAWKEYE-- REMAIN CALM--
CALM? WHY WOULD I BE--

AGGH! IT BURNS!!!
WAIT--IT'S HAPPENING TO ME, TOO--
WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?!


YOU SAID IT, PANTHER.

"WELCOME ABOARD."


SO, YES, STEPHEN STRANGE, LET US PLAY OUR LITTLE GAME. YOUR CONFIDENCE DOES NOT SURPRISE ME IN THE LEAST.
BUT EVEN YOU SHOULD REMEMBER WHAT THEY SAY AROUND THESE PARTS TO THOSE WHO FEEL LUCKY. HOW DOES IT GO AGAIN? OH, YES...

"...THE HOUSE ALWAYS WINS."

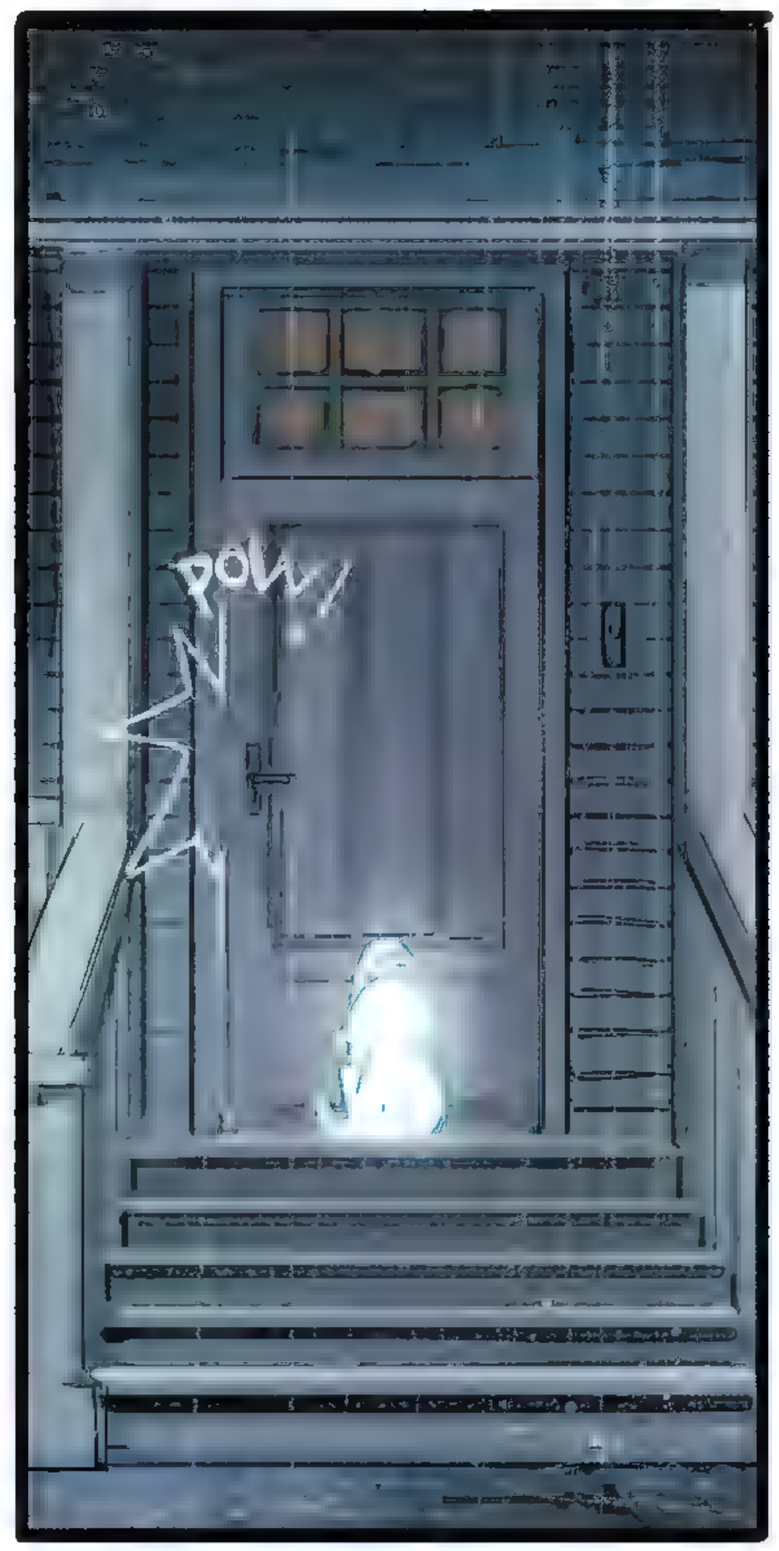
THIS FAILED ENGINEER AND EXPLORER ACHIEVED A SECOND SHOT AT FAME WITH HIS POPULAR SERIES OF ONLINE MOVIE REVIEWS, "HARVEY IN THE CAVE."

WHO IS THE MOLE MAN.

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH

???

SCRATCH SCRATCH SCRATCH



THAT WAS RUDE, BOSS.
SO IS SCRATCHING THE DOOR OF THE HOUSE OF WONG, GHOST DOG.

NAME'S BATS. YOU'RE WONG, RIGHT? I HEARD A LOT ABOUT YOU.
INTERESTING, SINCE I KNOW NOTHING OF YOU.
I GET THAT. BUT WE DO HAVE A FRIEND IN COMMON, AND HE'S IN SOME DEEP #$%@ RIGHT NOW.

THE DOC NEEDS YOUR HELP.

WHAT NOW?
LISTEN TO ME, "BATS"-- WHATEVER MESS STEPHEN HAS GOTTEN HIMSELF INTO, HE'S MORE THAN CAPABLE OF GETTING HIMSELF OUT OF IT.
HE'S MADE IT PERFECTLY CLEAR THAT MY COUNSEL IS NO LONGER SOMETHING HE VALUES. NOW, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME--

--I ALREADY MISSED A DAILY DOUBLE.
YEAH, I GET IT. BAD BLOOD, IT HAPPENS. BUT WAIT-- IT'S NOT JUST DOC THAT'S IN TROUBLE--

--IT'S VEGAS. SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO VEGAS.

UNBELIEVABLE. THE ARROGANCE. THE HUBRIS. IT'S--
PRETTY TYPICAL FOR HIM?
PRECISELY.

NOW MEPHISTO IS LOOSE ON EARTH, AND BRINGING HELL WITH HIM. IT WILL NOT ABATE WITH THIS CITY.
HEY, I TRIED TO TELL THE DOC IT WAS A BAD IDEA. BUT NOBODY LISTENS TO THE GUY THAT POOPS ON YOUR LAWN, YOU KNOW?
HMM...

THIS TELEPORTER, LONG THOUGHT TO BE A DOG, MAY ACTUALLY BE A--
OOH, I KNOW THIS ONE. HEY, WHERE YOU GOING?
COME WITH ME.

THE DARK LORD AND HIS ARMY WILL BE TOO POWERFUL FOR *US* TO FACE ALONE--
WHO SAID US?
TO DEFEAT HIM, WE WILL NEED THE HELP OF MANY--

--I WILL CALL UPON THE ONES WHO HAVE FACED HIS KIND BEFORE...
ALSO THE ONES WHO KNOW HOW TO BEAT STUFF UP GOOD. OOH, DO YOU KNOW THE HULK? YOU COULD CALL HIM. THAT'D BE COOL.
HE WOULD BE OF NO USE TO US--

TO BE CONTINUED...

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DOCTOR STRANGE CREATED BY
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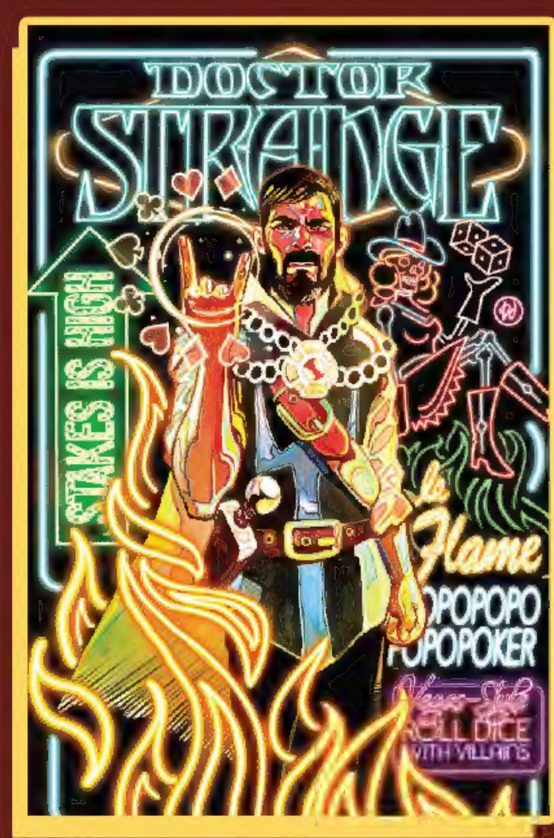
FOLLOW THE ROAD TO DAMNATION NOW THROUGH APRIL IN THE PAGES OF DOCTOR STRANGE; BEN REILLY: SCARLET SPIDER; IRON FIST; & DAMNATION: JOHNNY BLAZE GHOST RIDER

DOCTOR STRANGE: DAMNATION 2

DOCTOR STRANGE 386

BEN REILLY: SCARLET SPIDER 15

DOCTOR STRANGE 387



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